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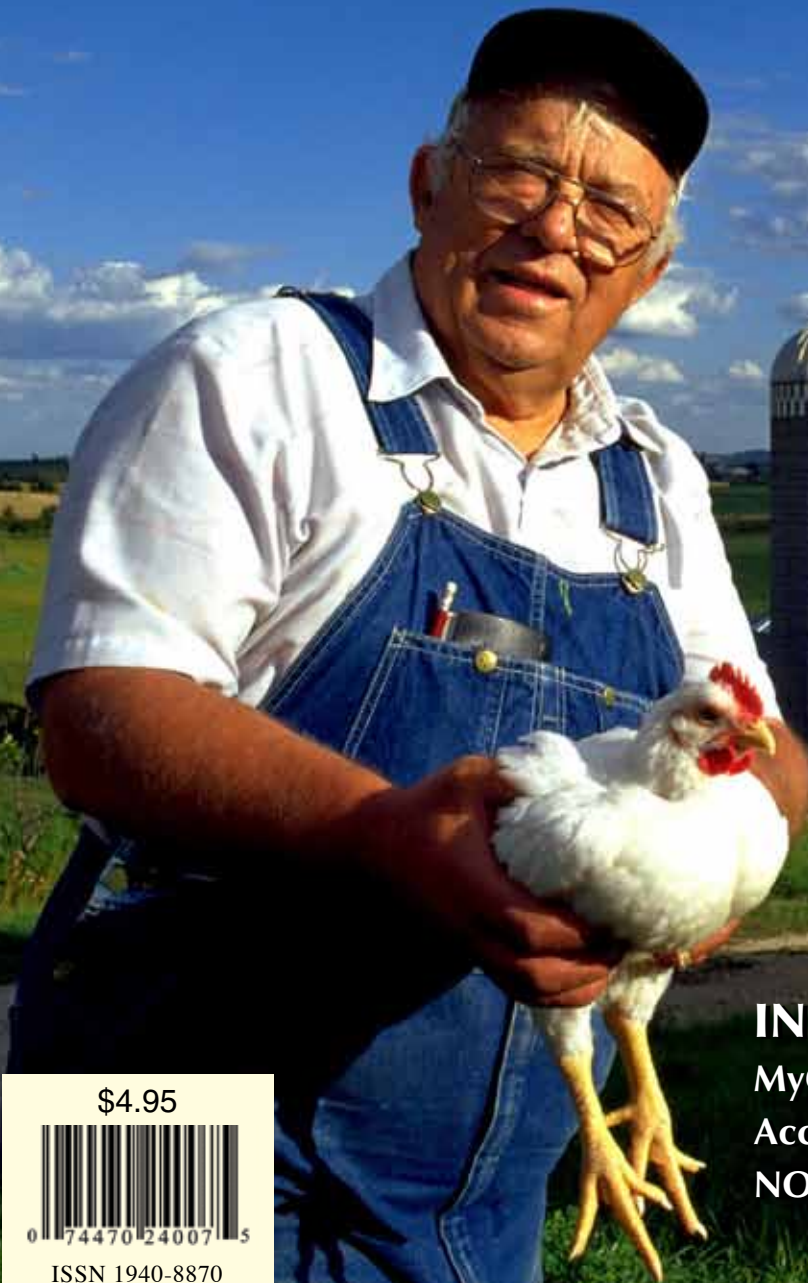
Certified Organic

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Winter 2011

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ISSN 1940-8870

IN THIS ISSUE

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Elizabeth Barba, CCOF Marketing Assistant, graduated from the University of California Santa Cruz with a B.A. in Environmental Studies in June 2010. She is excited to share her love of artichokes and organic home food preservation with the organic community.

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First Words

This edition of *Certified Organic* arrives as we wait out the cold, wet winter with hope for the new year and new growing season. We prepare for spring's green shoots and make resolutions to be more sustainable and proactive this year. With this season comes new products, crops, and ideas that will continue to grow the organic market.

To assist members in growing this market, CCOF is proud to announce the release of a new online certification management portal, MyCCOF. This new tool and time-saving resource is unique to CCOF and free to clients. Read all about it on page 18 and begin your year more organized than ever!

In addition to new organic tools and products, new ways to communicate are springing up all around us. Every day, people consider making organic purchases based on something they heard, read, or saw. As industry leaders, we have a responsibility to make sure consumers are getting the full story on organic.

Our feature article follows inventive CCOF members who have succeeded as storytellers by using creative and modern methods for relaying the stories behind their products. From a mom and pop shop turned nation-wide brand and preserving community, to a farmer-owner cooperative using social media to connect customers with local farmers, engaging storytelling comes in many different forms these days. In order to continue growing the organic market we must all tell our stories and tell them well. See page 26 for inspiration and advice on getting started.

CCOF continues communication with the National Organic Standards Board (NOSB) and encourages you to do the same by providing input on the petitions slated for the April meeting. Along with contributing to national policy, CCOF has been the host recently for international visitors as part of ongoing discussions on certification equivalency. See our Advocacy section, page 15, for more information.

Consider this edition of *Certified Organic* your Marketing 101 education and our Annual Convention to be your senior level course. This year's event, entitled *Growing the Organic Market*, will take place February 18-20 in sunny Ventura, California and will cover many of these themes in more depth. The three-day event will include our Annual Meeting, hands-on workshops and panel presentations by industry veterans, and our ever-popular farm tours. Plus, hear from keynote speaker, Rayne Pegg, Administrator of the USDA Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS). See page 14 for more details.

So to all CCOF growers, producers, handlers and organic supporters, Happy New Year! May this year bring growth, innovation, and new marketing opportunities to your organic business.

Sincerely,



Will Daniels
Chairman of the Board, CCOF, Inc.

In the News

GMO Sugar Beet Seed Plants in Debate

In November, Jeffrey White, U.S. District Court Judge of San Francisco, ordered the removal of all genetically modified sugar beet plants from the ground in Arizona and Oregon. The lawsuit, filed by environmental groups, challenged the USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service's



(APHIS) decision to issue permits to seed companies to plant sugar beet stecklings. The plants, which are grown to produce the GMO sugar beet seed, have raised concerns about potential environmental harm. APHIS allowed the permits despite an August 2010 ruling by White that had put the future planting of GMO sugar beets on hold. The new order calls for all plants producing seeds for the 2012 season to be destroyed. Almost 95% of all sugar beet crops have been modified to resist the weed killer glyphosate, commonly known as Roundup. The modified crop currently provides half of the nation's sugar supply. Monsanto, creator of Roundup, appealed the decision in December and the judge's order is currently on hold by the U.S. Court of Appeals.

Celebrating 20 Years of Organic

The Senate Agriculture Committee held a hearing entitled "The National Organic Law at 20: Sowing Seeds for a Bright Future" on September 15, 2010, to celebrate the 20-year anniversary of the Organic Foods Production Act (OFPA). The hearing served not only as a celebration but also as a forum for discussing the current challenges

of organic agriculture. Witnesses and Senators, including Senator Patrick Leahy (VT), the original sponsor of the OFPA, celebrated the legislation and growth in the organic industry and discussed the challenges faced by organic farmers, including the cost of certification and the danger of contamination by genetically modified crops. Kathleen Merrigan, Deputy Secretary of Agriculture, acted as a chief witness and addressed concerns about the integration of organics throughout USDA agencies. Other witnesses urged for continued funding for organic and legislation to help protect organic farmers from GMO contamination. We hope that this hearing will promote more interaction and discussion between legislators and organic producers.

TIME Magazine Counts the Benefits of Organic

A recent *TIME Magazine* article, "The Real Cost of Organic Food," from September 2010, explains the various reasons why organic food is a necessity for the health of both the environment and society. With obesity rates in the United States now at 27%, *TIME* explains that our society eats far too much processed meat and produce, which are filled with antibiotics, pesticides and hormones. Both the meat industry



and commercial agriculture were criticized. The article draws a contrast between agriculture's most polluting and inhumane operations, and organic and local farming efforts. It suggests

that local organic farming will lower organic produce prices by creating economies of scale in moving the food to market, and will lead America's diet in a healthier direction by providing safer, fresher food to consumers.

Link Between ADHD and Pesticide Exposure Discovered

A study composed of 300 Mexican-American children of the Salinas Valley, an agricultural region of California, alerted researchers to the connection between Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) and pesticide exposure. During the study, children, ranging in age from three to five years, and their mothers, were tested for the presence of pesticides several times a day. A small percentage of children revealed a correlation between the condition and pesticide use. While critics argue that the spike of ADHD occurrence in children is due to over-diagnosis, the study has raised concern regarding the parallels of agriculture and attention deficit disorders. No concrete cause and effect has been established at this time; however, more controlled studies will continue in non-agricultural areas.

New Grant for Farmers' Market Promotion

In an effort to expand consumer access to local food and provide income opportunities for local agricultural producers, the USDA approved grants for a Farmers' Market Promotion Program (FMPP). Approximately \$4.1 million has been made available through 77 grants in 34 states to increase locally grown fresh fruits and vegetables for low-income populations, many of which fall within "food deserts," mostly urban areas where there are few or no grocery stores or sources of fresh produce. The USDA, with the FMPP, has targeted these food deserts as a priority to supply affordable and nutritious fruits and vegetables to consumers. The funds for this initiative are provided by the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP); the Women, Infants and Children (WIC) Program; and the Farmers' Market Nutrition Program.



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MEMBER Organic TRADE ASSOCIATION

Oregon State University Announces Organic Blueberry Grants

The USDA will be awarding two grants to Oregon State University to support the production of organic blueberries in order to help small-scale and local farmers. One grant will fund research



for four years in Oregon and North Carolina to cultivate cost-effective, high-yielding, and nutritious organic blueberries.

According to the OSU Extension Service, Oregon farmers alone sold over \$24 million of blueberries in 2009. The second USDA grant will fund the design of an internet course to help aspiring organic farmers get started. According to Bernadine Strik, OSU researcher, organic berry production has increased immensely in recent years; however, little research has been done to answer

questions for aspiring farmers. OSU hopes to take on such needed research. This research will address pest management, harvesting, storage, and processing strategies associated with organic farming. The online course will address topics of labor, income, finances, and liability. 150 farms have completed the training so far. Garry Stephenson, coordinator of the small farms program, claims that the next ten years will see the largest transition of farmland in history, calling for many more farmers to join the agricultural community. The OSU grant program plans to fill that need.

OTA Contests Fox News Claims that Organic Consumers are "Suckers"

John Stossel of Fox Business Network challenged the environmental and health benefits of organic products and food in a segment on November 18,

2010. Stossel claimed that "chemicals are beneficial and organic consumers are just scared of pesticides," and are therefore "suckers." He assured that residues on conventional and cheaper crops are miniscule and below harmful levels, thus proving that organic consumers are simply paying a higher price for a "microscopic" difference. The Organic Trade Association (OTA) responded to Stossel's claims as a misinterpretation, one the entertainer had made many times before. OTA also released a response supporting the efforts and ideologies behind organic agriculture, noting the link between pesticides and birth defects, the onset of autism, neurodevelopment issues in newborns and young children, and the contraction of cancer. According to the OTA, conventional agricultural practices rank as the third most significant risk of cancer in a country where almost half (41%) of the population will be diagnosed with some form of cancer in their lives.



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Member News

Baby Carrots: "Eat 'Em Like Junk Food"

Bakersfield, California-based company Bolthouse Farms, Inc. has launched the first-ever marketing and advertising campaign for baby carrots, using the slogan "Eat 'Em Like Junk Food." The campaign is working to challenge the dominance that junk food companies



have over the idea of snacking. The baby carrots are sold in new packaging, with television advertising spots that satirically mimic junk food advertisements. The campaign includes outdoor billboards, social media, and customized vending machines to be placed next to junk food vending machines in schools. The new campaign even includes an iPod Touch and iPhone video game that is powered by the crunching of real baby carrots. The campaign launched in September 2010 with test markets in Cincinnati, Ohio and Syracuse, New York. They have plans to increase their markets later this year.

Lundberg Launches New Website

The nation's leading brand of organic rice and rice products, Lundberg Family Farms, has launched a new website to connect with their customers.



The new site has consumer-friendly features that allow visitors to rate and comment on dozens of original Lundberg recipes. Grant Lundberg, CEO of Lundberg Family Farms, said: "We wanted to start a dialogue with and among the people who enjoy our

products." The new website also introduces downloadable coupons and a blog about life on the Lundberg Family Farm, written by family members and employees. The new blog will detail the efforts and practices used to minimize the environmental impacts of the farm. Visit www.lundberg.com to browse.

Tcho Chocolate Featured in New York Times

Tcho Ventures, Inc., producer of high-end chocolate, was featured in a *New York Times* article in early November 2010. Based out of San Francisco's Pier 17, Tcho has emerged as an up-and-coming chocolate brand with products already sold

at Whole Foods, Macy's, Garden of Eden, and Starbucks. With a different approach to chocolate labels, Tcho chocolates are categorized by their dominant flavors: earth, nut, citrus, fruit, floral, and of course, chocolate. The article comments on the challenges of entering the chocolate market and making a name among revered chefs. It also highlights the new approach that Tcho brings to chocolate production; the company uses new technologies including computers, solar-powered monitoring cameras, and laboratories to create the best possible product. Tcho, which is conscious of agricultural sustainability and treatment of workers, is quickly becoming recognized by major pastry chefs for its delicious artisanal products, created in the United States.



BARRA Celebrates 65th Organic Winegrape Harvest

Charlie Barra, founder of BARRA of Mendocino, celebrated his 65th organic grape harvest this fall. As one of the first growers on the North Coast of California to grow organic Chardonnay,

Riesling, Cabernet Sauvignon, and Pinot Noir grapes, BARRA of Mendocino has expanded to produce an additional six varietals including Petite Sirah, Sangiovese, Merlot, Pinot Blanc, Muscat Canelli, and Zinfandel. The vineyard, which Barra started as a high school junior in 1945, is now over 175 acres. As he continued to grow organically, Barra saw many of his neighbors transition to the same practice. As more neighboring farms switch to organic growing methods, he enjoys watching wildlife return to his ranch. Barra, now 84 years old, still runs the show, overseeing all aspects of harvest and the winery, including pouring at CCOF's 2010 Organic Beer & Wine Tasting!



UNFI Purchases Renewable Energy for New Texas Distribution Center

The nation's largest distributor of organic and natural foods, United Natural Foods Inc. (UNFI), is buying 6,200 MWh (megawatt hours) of renewable energy and electricity for the company's Lancaster, Texas facility. An estimated 4,500 metric tons of carbon emissions will be reduced through the use of this renewable energy, equivalent to nearly 10,400 barrels of oil. UNFI received Green-e Energy certification for the purchased renewable energy and hopes to receive LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) certification for the structure to ensure environmental and client protection. UNFI is a contributing member to the EPA's Green Power Partnership and produces over two million kilowatt hours of sustainable energy through its solar and green energy facilities in California, Washington, and Connecticut.

Continued on page 11



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Member News

Continued from page 9

California Food Banks Now Offer Fresh Produce

IFCO Systems, an operator of Reusable Plastic Containers (RPCs) and a supporting member of CCOF, is working with the California Association of Food Banks (CAFB) to launch a pilot program to increase access and affordability of fresh produce to low-income families. The Farm to Family program was launched with Ocean Mist Farms and Pacific International Marketing earlier this year. IFCO is providing subsidies of their RPCs to growers so they can provide local food banks with their produce. In the past, a problem food banks had faced was finding a way for growers to harvest and transport donated produce in a way that was still affordable to growers; as a result, many individuals who depended on food banks were not able to get fresh

produce. In this program, growers are reimbursed by CAFB for the cost of harvesting, and IFCO lends growers the RPCs, which allow these donations to be financially feasible, therefore providing more people with healthy, fresh produce.

DeLoach Vineyards and Local College Build Organic Garden

DeLoach Vineyards has announced a collaboration with Kingsborough Community College in Brooklyn, New York to build the Kingsborough Urban Farm. The "Build a Garden in Brooklyn" project will be integrated into the school's curriculum to provide students the opportunity to grow and harvest fresh, organic produce in an urban center. Produce grown on the farm will be used by the culinary arts program, the student-catering firm, and

the college cafeteria. This partnership will complement DeLoach's efforts in sustainable farming and gardening while allowing them to help educate a new generation of organic advocates. Jean-Charles Boisset, proprietor of Boisset Family Estates, said of the partnership: "As stewards of the land, our responsibility lies not only in fostering best practices within our own methods, but also in sharing the breadth of our knowledge with our communities. We're happy to participate in the Kingsborough Urban Farm as it helps educate young people about what we have so passionately believed in for years at DeLoach Vineyards."



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At Work

CCOF 5th Annual Organic Beer & Wine Tasting: Another Success for Organic!

CCOF thanks our certified breweries and wineries for their participation in the 5th Annual CCOF Organic Beer & Wine Tasting, held October 29, 2010, at the San Francisco Ferry Building. An enthusiastic crowd attended and enjoyed learning about organic brewing and winemaking while tasting some wonderful beverages. The event allowed CCOF members to gain direct access to consumers, all while raising funds for CCOF's education and advocacy programs. Registration for our 6th Annual Organic Beer & Wine Tasting will begin in February 2011; stay tuned for notices from CCOF.

All Things Organic/Natural Products Expo East

In October, several CCOF staff attended All Things Organic/Natural Products Expo East, in Boston, Massachusetts. This event is dedicated to growing the organic industry and bringing buyers and sellers together. CCOF exhibited and promoted our members and the value of organic certification. Attendees were interested in hearing about the certification process and finding organic suppliers. Many key players from the organic community attended and exhibited, including the National Organic Program (NOP). "The NOP had several staff members at their booth in the exhibit hall available to meet with organic producers, consumers, and certifiers," says Jody Biergiel, CCOF Director of Handler Certification. "It appears the Age of Enforcement will also be the age of transparency and accessible government."

In addition to exhibiting, CCOF staff members contributed to the education program. Jake Lewin, CCOF Chief Certification Officer, was a speaker in the "Organic Integrity - A Global Look at the Public-Private Partnership" session. This session also included representatives from Soil Association,

WSDA Organic Food Program, International Organic Accreditation Service, and the Washington State Department of Agriculture, who discussed how their organizations are helping maintain the integrity of the organic label. Biergiel moderated a session titled "Retail Differentiation through Organic Activism," which looked at voluntary retail certification, sourcing local organic products, and using social media to motivate shoppers.



Jody Biergiel speaks with Melissa Bailey, Director of the Standards Division, National Organic Program.

Sunol Valley Farms Field Trip

CCOF Grower and Livestock Certification staff visited several farms in Sunol Valley, California this October. Their first stop included three farms in the Sunol Ag Park: Baia Nicchia Farm and Nursey and Iu-Mien Village Farms (both CCOF certified), and Terra Bella Farm. The Sunol Ag Park integrates sustainable agriculture, natural resource stewardship, and public education. Most of the farms at the park grow for local farmers' markets and CSA (Community Supported Agriculture) programs. Next, CCOF staff headed over to Hillcrest Ranch, where they grow and press Picholine and Mission olives into extra virgin olive oils and handcrafted soaps. Kathleen Elliot, owner of Hillcrest Ranch, guided CCOF staff through the storage and production

process, her farmers' market table presentation, and the family history of the farm.



Kathleen Elliot's farmers' market presentation.

The afternoon was spent at J.E. Perry Farms in Fremont, where staff enjoyed a visit to the family-friendly pumpkin patch, toured the farm via tractor, and learned about how father and son team, Joe and Doug Perry, are using the farm to educate future generations about organic food production. The day wrapped up with a visit to the Olivina Mill, where Hillcrest Ranch olives are processed. Here the staff learned about how the olive mill processes organic and conventional olives in the same facility.



CCOF staff proudly display their squash!

Overall, the growers and processors were enthusiastic and impressive in their commitment to organic. A broad

Continued on page 14



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range of backgrounds were represented and the experience was very educational for CCOF staff as it highlighted the families, history, and sustainability behind their organic food source.

Western Organic Dairy Producers Fall Conference

In October 2010, CCOF attended the annual Western Organic Dairy Producers fall conference in Modesto, California. Devon Pattillo, CCOF Livestock Certification Specialist, participated in a panel discussion about the new pasture requirements for organic producers, and shared examples of records that meet the requirements. Elizabeth Whitlow, Regional Service Representative for the CCOF North Coast Chapter, was also in attendance. The event offered CCOF opportunities to field questions about organic livestock requirements, connect with certified producers, and hear about broader issues affecting organic dairies.

CCOF Annual Convention: Growing the Organic Market

CCOF's 2011 Annual Convention, *Growing the Organic Market*, is coming February 18-20 to sunny Ventura, California.

The Convention begins with the CCOF Annual Meeting and welcoming reception featuring organic products from throughout the Ventura/Oxnard area. This year's Convention agenda focuses on bringing your products to market and expanding the organic marketplace. Gain valuable knowledge that you can immediately apply on your farm or operation and in your marketing plan. Enjoy networking with other organic producers, processors, handlers, and supporting industries.

Hands-on workshops and panel presentations will feature experts in five market areas:

- Wholesale/Distributor/Retail
- Farmers' Markets
- CSAs
- Chefs/Restaurants/Schools
- Export Markets

An exhibitor showcase will feature suppliers to the organic sector. The final day offers the ever-popular tours of local CCOF operations in the beautiful Ojai Valley.

Register online at www.ccof.org/educationconference.php or mail or fax the registration form to the right.



Growing The Organic Market

CCOF Annual Convention

Registration by Mail

(Please photocopy for each person enrolling)
Complete this form and send with payment to:

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Participant Information

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Will you attend (no cost events)?

The CCOF Annual Meeting Friday, February 18, 4:30pm-7pm? Yes No
The CCOF Reception Friday, February 18, 7pm-8:30pm? Yes No
The CCOF Certification 101 Workshop Sunday, February 20, 8am-9am? Yes No

Payment Information

Register by January 7, 2011 to secure your place and save.
Fees include conference materials and meals.

<p>Postmarked on or before January 7, 2011</p> <p>Both days</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> \$120 General Public <input type="checkbox"/> \$100 CCOF Member</p> <p>Day 2 Conference only</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> \$100 General Public <input type="checkbox"/> \$80 CCOF Member</p> <p>Day 3 Tour only</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> \$45 General Public <input type="checkbox"/> \$35 CCOF Member</p>	<p>Postmarked after January 7, 2011</p> <p>Both days</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> \$155 General Public <input type="checkbox"/> \$120 CCOF Member</p> <p>Day 2 Conference only</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> \$125 General Public <input type="checkbox"/> \$100 CCOF Member</p> <p>Day 3 Tour only</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> \$50 General Public <input type="checkbox"/> \$40 CCOF Member</p>
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CCOF Prepares for April 2011 NOSB Meeting

The Spring 2011 National Organic Standards Board (NOSB) meeting will be held in Seattle, Washington on April 26-29, 2011. CCOF staff and members have been preparing for this very important meeting for months, and we encourage all of you to get involved in the development of the standards that affect U.S. organic production. Both the NOSB and the National Organic Program (NOP) website have information on how to file a petition, weigh in on previously filed petitions, and comment on recommendation and discussion documents for the April meeting. The most current meeting agenda is also posted on these sites.

Several of the petitions that will be considered by the NOSB in April have direct impact on our members and we encourage you to be heard by submitting your comments to the NOSB on these petitions. While CCOF does not currently have a position on these issues, CCOF feels it's important to keep our clients informed. One petition would allow sulfites in wines labeled "organic," a change that would affect the current standard which stipulates that wines containing added sulfites must be labeled "made with organic grapes."

California's SOP in Full Compliance with NOP

Years of work on the California State Organic Program (SOP) have culminated in legislation and regulation that finally bring the program into full compliance with the National Organic Program (NOP) and streamline the mandatory California organic registration process.

CCOF and others, including the California Farm Bureau Federation (CFBF), worked with legislators to sponsor AB 2612, authored by the Assembly Committee on Agriculture. The law was signed by the Governor and went into effect on January 1, 2011. Although non-exempt organic operators in California (those making

\$5,000 or more on organic) will still be required to submit a detailed map with their registration form, they will NOT be required to submit other information, such as a list of all substances applied to the crop, soil, or irrigation water. That information is already contained in the operator's Organic System Plan (OSP) which can be attached to the registration application.

During our work with the SOP on streamlining the registration process, it was determined that they had been performing spot inspections without proper regulatory authority. These inspections are crucial to ensuring the integrity of organic operations in California, and CCOF agreed that the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) needed to promulgate regulations to obtain this authority. Those regulations were approved in late November and went into effect on January 1, 2011.

CCOF will continue to attend every California Organic Products Advisory Committee (COPAC) meeting and work with CDFA and SOP staff to ensure that the program continuously maintains and improves its role with California's organic producers and processors.

New California Organic Fertilizer Law in Effect

AB 856, which was signed into law in 2009 and is being phased in through 2012, continues to affect both manufacturers of Organic Input Materials (OIMs) and CCOF operators. By the time this edition of *Certified Organic* goes to print, the second phase of the law – the regulations that provide the details to the legislation – will be enacted, and those who use OIMs will need to comply with the law. The AB 856 Implementation Subcommittee, on which Claudia Reid, CCOF's Policy Director, serves, will keep meeting throughout 2011 to develop suggestions for how the law should be implemented in a way that allows the State to prosecute potential perpetrators of fraud without harming organic commerce.


AB 856 provides additional levels of authority for CDFA to inspect and enforce labeling and ingredient provisions of the California Fertilizer law and has specific language about how input materials approved for organic use may be regulated and monitored. The AB 856 Implementation Subcommittee was appointed by the Secretary of Food and Agriculture to make recommendations to the California Fertilizer Inspection Advisory Board (CFIAB) that is charged with advising the secretary and CDFA staff on how to implement these new provisions. AB 856 increases inspection and penalties on fertilizer and compost manufacturers for organic input materials. CCOF and others, including the Organic Trade Association (OTA), the Organic Materials Review Institute (OMRI), and many manufacturers continue to encourage CDFA to promulgate regulations that are enforceable and focus on areas of highest risk.

CCOF Hosts EU and Canadian Delegates


CCOF was privileged to host two visits in late 2010 for delegations of organic regulators from the European Union (EU) and Canada. In both instances, the National Organic Program (NOP) staff requested CCOF's assistance in showcasing U.S. organic operations that represent a specific segment of the organic industry. For the EU, the visit was part of a larger exploratory effort to recommence discussions about organic equivalency.

CCOF took the EU and NOP visitors to certified organic walnut, dairy, strawberry, and mixed vegetable operations. The delegation was duly impressed with the size and efficiency of each operation, and our clients represented themselves and the U.S. industry quite well during the questioning, which focused on the differences between the U.S. and the EU systems.



The Canadian delegation was interested in viewing products that Canada frequently imports from the United States, as well as in issues surrounding livestock practices and the use of



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Advocacy Continued from page 15

Sodium nitrate, also referred to as Chilean nitrate. By touring a CCOF certified egg operation and a mixed vegetable operation, the Canadian visitors gained a better understanding of the similarities and differences that exist between U.S. organic production and Canadian organic production. We are grateful to our clients for their participation in these visits and their willingness to help inform other countries about how things are done in the United States.

Mexican Organic Update

You read in our Fall 2010 issue of *Certified Organic* about the work our Policy Specialist, Zea Sonnabend, has been doing with others on the Mexican treated seed issue. In addition to the seed issue, the Mexican Organic Regulations are expected to go into effect next year and have some significant challenges for Mexican clients if they are not modified. Sonnabend will continue to represent CCOF with the Organic Trade Association's (OTA) Mexico task force, working with others in the United States and in Mexico to stay abreast of how the Mexican organic standards are developing.

Please contact CCOF Policy Director, Claudia Reid, at policy@ccof.org with questions, comments, or to provide input on NOSB petitions. You can also find information about NOSB meetings and petitions on CCOF's website, www.ccof.org/nop.php.

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Certification News

MyCCOF Revolutionizes Online Services

We are pleased to announce the full client-wide release of CCOF's new online certification management portal, MyCCOF. This additional service is unique to CCOF and free to our clients. Clients may use MyCCOF to monitor their certification and renewals, get key documents, and track the inspection and certification process. You can also monitor your account status and submit payments. To learn more visit www.ccof.org/myccof or click the MyCCOF logo at www.ccof.org.

During the coming months and years, CCOF will expand this service to provide more features and benefits for CCOF members. Today, clients can use MyCCOF to:

- Download copies of your most recent certificate and client profile.
- Track inspections throughout the process and find your inspector's contact information.
- Monitor every operation you are associated with. Perfect for consultants, managers, and partnerships!
- Monitor contacts, facilities, private label brand owners, and other links to your operation.
- Download copies of recent letters from CCOF.
- Monitor the status of Action Items such as Requests for Information, Notices of Noncompliance, and submissions from you to CCOF.
- Track the payment status of invoices and easily pay your bills online.
- Track program enrollment and renewal status.
- View promotional operation information stored by CCOF such as sales types, apprenticeship offerings, and company statements.

New Canadian Export Requirements

In early November 2010, the National Organic Program (NOP) clarified that under the U.S.-Canada Organic Equivalence Arrangement all products exported to Canada should be accompanied by documentation that contains the following statement:

"Certified in compliance with the terms of the US-Canada Organic Equivalency Arrangement".

This statement may appear on organic certificates, bills of lading, transaction certificates, purchase orders, or other "affirmative attestation." While this statement may be applied by the seller, it may only be used for product that fully complies with the equivalency arrangement.



CCOF ensured that this statement was included on the Global Market Access (GMA) certificate for all clients who met the terms of the equivalency arranged in September 2010; it will appear on all certificates going forward. The CCOF GMA certificate may be used to accompany shipments of products that meet the agreement. CCOF strongly recommends enrollment in the GMA program to all operators who ship products to Canada or who produce products that may ultimately be shipped to Canada by someone else.

The NOP also clarified that in order to comply with the equivalency arrangement:

- All products, not just raw produce, must be verified to have been produced without the use of Chilean nitrate. CCOF will require that clients with processed goods currently approved for Canada use in 2011 to secure documentation confirming that all ingredients comply with this requirement. This may be in the form of affidavits or certificates of compliance from certifiers. All new products seeking equivalency approval must demonstrate compliance with the arrangement prior to receiving approval. CCOF will concentrate its efforts on identifying specific crops that may be grown with Chilean nitrate and may not require substantial documentation for ingredients that do not pose a risk.
- Hydroponic and aeroponic production may not be sold as organic in Canada.
- Animal products exported to Canada must be produced in compliance with the stocking densities in the Canadian organic standards. CCOF will verify this during upcoming inspections for operations requesting Canadian export verification.

The Canadian Organic Office has stated that at the current time the organic standards are in a "soft enforcement" stage. As these requirements differ slightly from the previous "produce only" implementation, CCOF operations will be allowed appropriate time to demonstrate compliance. If CCOF or CCOF operations have knowledge that particular products or ingredients do not comply with any of the terms of the equivalency arrangement (such as the use of Chilean nitrate), these items will not be granted equivalency status and must not be represented or sold as organic in Canada.

CCOF will be modifying Manual III, inspection documents, affidavits, and various other information resources in the near future to assist clients with compliance. Read the NOP's announcement by visiting www.ams.usda.gov/nop and viewing "International Agreements" followed by "Equivalence Agreements."

Inspection Changes for 2011

Beginning in 2011, CCOF inspectors will no longer provide a copy of their inspection reports directly to clients. Instead,

Certification News

all inspection reports and associated photos will be available online to all clients via MyCCOF. CCOF clients may also receive a hard copy of their report by contacting their Regional Service Representative (RSR). Your RSR is identified at the bottom of all CCOF certification correspondence, and a complete list of CCOF RSRs is available at www.ccof.org/rsr.php.

CCOF Develops Helpful Post-Inspection Tools

Two new documents have been created to help CCOF clients understand the certification process.

What to Expect After Your Inspection: Clarifies the inspector's role and what clients should expect as potential outcomes following the inspection. This helpful document is provided to all clients by their inspector.

Certification Tips: Provides important reminders for both growers and processors regarding the most common certification problems and mistakes. You will receive this sheet when you complete your annual renewal.

Copies of both documents are available at CCOF's Certification Assistance page located at www.ccof.org/certificationassistance.php. This page also includes a variety of helpful record keeping forms and other key resources.

CCOF Releases Revised Certification Manual

CCOF has recently released a new version of Manual I, *A Guide to CCOF Certification*. This improved version includes several updates and clarifications regarding CCOF processes and procedures. The updated manual also includes key legal protections for CCOF and requires that CCOF clients involved in Adverse Action appeals and other legal proceedings, such as subpoena requests, pay CCOF legal and staff time costs. These changes are intended to protect CCOF and CCOF clients by ensuring that CCOF has the necessary resources to provide excellent service to all clients. Key sections that have been updated include:

- Definitions: Clarifications and standardization of terms between CCOF and the National Organic Program.
- 1.2.4 Private Label Entities: Clarification and updates to this section, removal of redundant section.
- 1.3 Overview of CCOF Certification Manuals: Clarification of availability of CCOF Manuals. Notification that CCOF reserves the right to modify these manuals at its discretion. Applicants and clients are required to meet the requirements in the most current Manuals.
- 1.3.1 Additional Resources: Clarification regarding OMRI Generic and Product Lists availability as additional resources, but not formal CCOF manuals.

- 2.2 Application Review and Cost Estimate: Updates reflecting current practices regarding Regional Service Representative (RSR) assignment and inspection process.
- 2.5.1 Continuation of Certification Procedure: Updates reflecting current renewal processes and post-inspection review outcomes.
- 2.5.2 Withdrawal of Certification: Clarification to allow formal, verbal certification withdrawal process.
- 2.7.1 & 2.7.1.1 Noncompliance and Correction of Noncompliance Procedures: Clarification of noncompliance process and reasons for issuing noncompliances, updated to reflect NOP requirements.
- 2.7.5.1 False Labeling and Misrepresentation of Organic Status: Title modified to include misrepresentation of organic status in addition to labels so that web and other representations are covered. Civil penalty notification updated to reflect current \$11,000 fee level.
- 2.11 Indemnification: Requirement to indemnify CCOF against legal claims.
- 4.8.6 Fees for Other Services: Updates reflecting current billing rates for technical services such as subpoenas, documentation research, and other requests.
- 4.9 Complaint, Investigation and Adverse Action Fees: Requirement that CCOF clients are responsible for reimbursing CCOF for all costs incurred by CCOF as a result of adverse actions, investigations, and legal issues involving the applicant or client. Ensures that costs associated with appeals and mediations in which CCOF prevails are the responsibility of the operator. These measures will ensure that CCOF clients in good standing are not forced to pay for the significant time and expense associated with appeals and subsequent formal administrative proceedings at the State or Federal level.

A copy of the new manual can be found by visiting www.ccof.org/standards.php or by contacting CCOF and asking to have a copy sent to you free of charge. If you have questions or comments, please contact Jake Lewin, Chief Certification Officer, at jake@ccof.org.

Renewals: Still Due

As reported in the last *Certified Organic*, CCOF annual certification renewals are due January 1, 2011. If you have not already paid your annual fees and submitted your renewal contract, you must do so immediately. Operations that do not complete BOTH of these steps by February 15, 2011 risk receiving a Notice of Noncompliance and \$75 fee. Visit www.ccof.org/renewal.php and www.ccof.org/payment.php to complete this process online today.

Exporting Organic

Taking the leap into the international marketplace can seem a bit overwhelming. Some of the top challenges that organic producers face when looking to expand their exporting operations are barriers related to international regulations; the costs of developing markets; difficulty in finding distributors, buyers, or importers; and lack of knowledge of foreign markets.



Many countries have developed their own standards for organic food and, over time, there has been an increased uniformity in organic regulations and equivalency agreements. The CCOF Global Market Access (GMA) program offers certification to these various international standards for CCOF certified members who export their crops and/or products, or sell to buyers who may ultimately export their product.

CCOF certified member Taylor Brothers Farms is a leading producer and global distributor of organic prunes and prune products. As a member of the GMA Program, they have successfully distributed their organic products throughout North America, Europe, and Asia. John Taylor shares his own insights into the best ways to successfully export organic products.



Getting Started

Before you begin the process, here are some things to think about.

- 1. Handling of product.** Logistics can involve trucking, shipping, and storage. Will you need cold or common storage? High humidity or low?
- 2. The environment.** What is the environment that you are shipping into? How will the climate affect your product?
- 3. Shelf life or perishable.** What do you need to do to maintain the quality of your product? Will there be added packaging and handling costs?

4. Distance of travel, length of time. How does your product handle transportation?

5. Culture of the country you're shipping to. How are they going to use the product? Is your product new to the culture of the country you plan to export to? Will it take a lot of education for them to understand your product and how it is used? How much time and money do you want to invest in consumer education and advertising?

6. Where is your product going to fit? Is it for retail, food service, or industrial purposes? Who is the end user? How will it be used, consumed, cooked, etc? How is it presented? Does it have nutrition highlights, organic focus, or health benefits, or is it just a common, every day food?

7. The demand. What is the demand, or can the demand be created? Is the main focus to present something that is new and different to the marketplace or to present a better product of what already exists in this area? The big question to ask is "I like it, but will everyone else?"

These questions are stepping stones towards developing your exporting business strategy. Take the time to anticipate potential problems and needs to avoid common pitfalls and mistakes.

The Must-Dos for Exporting

The first container is always the hardest to ship. The worry can be greater than the work at times. However, if you lay out your plan, familiarize yourself with the laws and regulations of the foreign market, and read over these key points, exporting can be straightforward and successful.

1. Establish a Solid Relationship with Buyers

Be sure to find someone who is willing to spend the time and effort to promote your product. Be sure to detail your shipping procedures and communicate them with your customers. Problems may arise, but can be overcome if you're willing to do the work.

2. Anticipate Timing

It can take up to 2 months for a shipment to reach your country of choice. From there, it has to be distributed to the wholesalers and, then, to the retailers. If you want payment soon or up front, you may have to discount your product until a firm relationship is established. Don't expect anything to happen quickly, especially if it is a new product intended for a new market.



The CCOF Global Market Access program helped us gain access to foreign markets that we would have struggled to be certified for on our own.
— John Taylor

Exporting Organic

3. Check Foreign Labeling Laws

Be aware of foreign packaging and label laws. These can be very strict, and your product needs to be approved by the importing country. In addition, it must meet the organic labeling requirements of the importing country and in some cases, NOP labeling requirements as well. Plan to have label approval done very early in the importing process to assure that you won't have to make corrections after the processing of your product has begun. This can be a costly mistake and is easily avoided with proper planning.

4. Product Standards

Make sure that ALL products meet the buyer's standards. With the long distance it takes to send out your product, the last thing you want is your product shipped back to you. The loss in sales, the correction of packaging or product, and the time lost is too expensive to let a returned shipment happen. Remember, re-working processed goods eats up your hard-earned profit.

5. Certification Documentation

Recordkeeping is very involved for exporting. It will take twice the amount of paper work to get products into a foreign country than it does to get it into a domestic

market. It is important to keep track of all export certificates and importer approvals. A good freight forwarder can save a lot of time and effort. They are able to keep you from getting shipments hung up in storage or delayed at the ports of entry, and they can also help in fixing problems at the shipping and receiving ports.

6. General Requirements for Export

In addition to the above details, organic fruit and vegetables must also meet the usual requirements concerning all exported fresh fruit and vegetables, whether organic or conventional. Some of these requirements include: grade and quality standards, phytosanitary certification, customs import clearance, and adherence to country-specific Maximum Residue Levels (MRLs) standards for tolerances for pesticides, herbicides, and fungicides. Note: Since organic production prohibits the use of most synthetic pesticides, organic producers are unlikely to exceed these MRLs; however, those who use some of the few synthetic inputs permitted by organic standards should be aware of these requirements.

For more information on CCOF's GMA Program, visit www.ccof.org/international.php, or contact export@ccof.org.

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How to Sell to Retail

Fostering Your Retail Relationships

Mark Mulcahy, an organic retail consultant of 15 years, has led hundreds of workshops on grower-retail relations and set up strong local grower-retail programs around the country. His recommendations on entering this market always start with a quote from Denesse Willey of T&D Willey farms: "A good deal is a good deal for all parties."

With this thought as a guideline you can grow any challenge into a positive and sustainable relationship. Often the problem a grower has with accessing a market or working with a retailer stems from a lack of understanding of retail operations, unclear expectations from the retailer, and a need for better communication from both parties.

The following are suggestions for growers wanting to develop strong relationships and foster better communication with a retail partner.

The 2009 CIRS study "Breaking Down Market Barriers for Small and Mid-sized Organic Growers," prepared by Alida Cantor and Ron Stochlic, found that 66% of farmers surveyed said that locating and accessing markets is a challenge in their operations.

1. Take a Walk

Identify whom you want to work with and take a day to visit those departments.

- How do they display produce?
- Is the department full and abundant? Is it well-culled?
- Is the display complementary to the produce they sell? Is it exciting?
- Does the display make you want to shop there?
- Do they have good point-of-purchase materials?
- Are the employees friendly and knowledgeable?

If not, you may want to reconsider them as a partner. How their department looks and feels on a given Wednesday afternoon can tell you a lot about how your produce will be handled and sold. Another thing to notice is the size and quality of the product being sold. Do they sell a lot of bagged fruit? What about more exotic or less common items? Would your product work here?

2. Do Your Homework

Find out who is the lead contact. In a smaller store under 15,000 sq. ft., your lead contact is most likely the produce manager, whereas in a medium to large store of 15,000 to 30,000 sq. ft., they may have a designated buyer. You may

have to go through a produce coordinator or central distribution center for stores larger than 30,000 sq. ft. or stores that are part of a chain.

Don't stop at produce. Many prepared foods departments are doing more direct buying these days and that contact could be a foot in the door to the produce department that may not have been initially interested. Once you've established the correct contact, find out their schedule and call to schedule a time to meet with them.

Tip: Most managers and buyers are busy in the morning (with stocking, inventory, etc.) so you are less likely to have their full attention. Call in the afternoon to introduce yourself and set up your meeting.

3. Prepare for the meeting

Consider asking the following questions:

- What kind of food do you specialize in? Gourmet, organic, local?
- Do you buy from many local growers? If so, whom?
- Who's your clientele?
- How long have you been in business?
- What are your store's signature departments?

Make sure you cover:

1. **Delivery** – Do they have delivery hours? Is there a particular person to check in with when delivering? Where do they take deliveries (back or front of the store)?
2. **Ordering** – What days do they order? What times? Is there a cut off? Do they prefer to get your availability via email, fax, phone call, or an online ordering system (e.g. Local Dirt, www.localdirt.com)?
3. **Quality standards** – Do they like certain sizes of apples? Does the chard sell better when it is bunched a certain size?
4. **Packaging** – Do they have packing standards? Do they save boxes? Are they willing to accept RPCs (returnable plastic containers)
5. **Payment** – What are their terms?

Items to bring to your meeting:

- A current copy of your CCOF certificate.
- Samples! Produce and kitchen managers love to try what they will be buying (Note: If they don't - they may not be the people you want selling your food). Bring enough to share with the floor staff as having them on

How to Sell to Retail

your side will go far in how successfully your product is sold to customers.

- A yearly or seasonal production schedule. For every manager that considers this unnecessary there will be five managers who will be glad you went through the effort.
- A wish list for the retailer and your farm. What would they like to have someone growing for them? What are some crops you have been thinking about trying?

Come with recipes, information about your farm and crops, and tips for consumers on preparing your produce. Be creative. Give people ideas or menus. If it's a value-added product, such as a special sauce, offer some serving suggestions to help the retailer promote your item.

4. Tell your story

Come prepared to tell the "story" of your farm. People want to hear the real life context for your business, and written and verbal stories give them that experience. Make yourself and your farm real.

- Where are you from?
- What's the history of your farm?
- Who else lives on the farm? Is it a family operation?
- What kinds of animals, if any, live there?

Bring pictures and if you have a website, be sure to direct them to it. For an added touch, invite them to visit your farm or ranch. For more tips on sharing your story, read the feature article on page 26.

5. Know Your Numbers

Retailers are well versed in their department financials. Most often they can explain exactly why they price their products at specific price points and how much income they need to run their departments, meet their sales margin, and meet labor goals. Some growers, however, cannot tell what it takes to run the farm. This puts the grower at a disadvantage in any financial negotiation.

An average well-run produce department spends 65% of every dollar on COGS (cost of goods), which leaves 35% to pay its bills. 10% of that goes to labor and 25% goes to contribution margin (utilities, rent, administration, fixtures, marketing, etc). After all is said and done, an average natural foods store produce department makes about .3 to .5% in profit per dollar to invest back into the store.

6. Be Willing to Adapt

Perhaps you grow slicing tomatoes, but the store already has two slicing tomato growers. Don't let the conversation end there. Ask if they have an heirloom grower, a roma grower, or a small economy tomato grower. They may have a red and green chard grower, but what about gold or rainbow? Get creative and be flexible; once you're an established seller, other opportunities may abound.

7. Be Reliable and Show Them That You Care

Reliability is a key aspect of maintaining a positive relationship with retailers. Be on time to meetings, fulfill requested orders, and communicate any issues or concerns you have directly with your lead contact. Show an interest in the retailer's business – ask how sales are going, what kinds of goals they have, and learn their mission. Express your gratitude and give compliments both directly and succinctly. Like the farming world, retail operations are complex and multifaceted. With the right tools, knowledge, and attitude, you can build relationships that will last a lifetime.

About the Author:



Mark Mulcahy is an award winning retail consultant, educator, and organic advocate. He is a member of CDS Consulting Co-op, which provides produce consulting and educational services for Co-ops, independent retailers and growers worldwide. Mulcahy is co-host of "An Organic Conversation," a national radio show that airs every

Saturday morning on Green 960 AM in San Francisco, CA. Contact Mulcahy by phone at (707) 495-2168 or email MarkMulcahy@cdsconsulting.coop.

Have organic expertise that would be helpful to CCOF members? Email your article ideas and comments to marketing@ccof.org

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Sharing Your Story

By Elizabeth Barba



Photos, left to right, courtesy of Organic Valley, Happy Girl Kitchen Co., Ocean Mist Farms, Organic Valley.

Stories have been passed down from generation to generation through songs, recipes, anecdotes, beliefs, and actions. They are educational and entertaining, bridging the gap between the past and the present. As time has passed and technology has developed, storytelling has expanded to reach larger groups of people through different means of communication. Farmers are no longer restricted to sharing their story on the farm or at the farmers' market. Recording and sharing stories is easier than ever before and organic farmers and producers have a unique opportunity to connect with customers and consumers everywhere. You can now share your story from the seat of your tractor with a community of organic consumers who have never stepped foot on your field.

Stories travel and grow through interactive websites; blogs; newsletters and email lists; and a variety of social networking sites including Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube. These storytelling mediums have changed the way farmers and producers communicate with their target audience, the organic consumer. The relationships and communities formed through these tools generate brand loyalty while spreading the missions and goals of both producers and consumers. Storytelling through social media increases market visibility and is a less costly alternative to new marketing campaigns. Social media tools and other creative approaches allow farmers and producers to promote products and streamline communication while remaining informed and involved in the industry.



One of the faces of Organic Valley. Photo courtesy of Organic Valley.

The Organic Valley Story: Your Neighborhood Farmer

In January of 1988, George Seimon, current Organic Valley CEO, met with a group of Southwestern Wisconsin farmers to discuss sustainable agriculture and the disappearance of family farmers. At that meeting the Coulee Region Organic Produce Pool (CROPP) was formed. Dedicated to organic agriculture and the preservation of disappearing farming communities, CROPP, which now stands for Cooperative Regions of Organic Produce Pools, is a collective of over 1,600 farmer-owners in 33 states and four Canadian provinces. Marketed under the brand name Organic Valley, the CROPP cooperative is able to keep a large number of family farmers in business while fulfilling their vision for sustainable agriculture.



Organic Valley has made an enormous effort to connect their customers across the nation to the farmer-owners and families who produce the food they eat. The "Who's Your Farmer?" campaign featured on Organic Valley's website, launched in September 2010, serves as a functional and informative listing of Organic Valley's farmer-owners growing food in their area. Each listing features a photograph of the family or farm and a short, descriptive profile. This campaign connects Organic Valley customers with organic farmers in their region, putting a human face to the Organic Valley brand and helping customers feel more connected to the products they purchase and the people who create them. The "Who's Your Farmer?" page is now the third most frequently visited page on the Organic Valley website,

coming in close behind the homepage and coupons.

Organic Valley used another online tool to engage customers when they joined Facebook in 2008. Their page now has over 46,000 fans who receive updates and posts by Organic Valley on their "news feed," a real-time stream of news that appears on users' homepages. Organic Valley's Facebook fans are able to comment on their posts as well as upload their own photographs to the page. Many recent comments are stories of customer appreciation for a specific product. Greg Brickl, Interactive Marketing Manager at Organic Valley, notes that the cooperative uses social media not just to promote products or partnerships, but also to share information, farmer-owner profiles, and news circulating in the organic industry. Organic Valley has recently used Facebook to promote a weekly giveaway. Entrants must visit the Organic Valley website to enter. This method of calling out content that is featured on the Organic Valley website serves as a marketing tool to generate customer interest and loyalty while building on a large community of consumers interested in organic food.

"Social media is an excellent tool to allow bi-directional communication between us and the consumer"

While sharing their story online has been a success, Organic Valley must occasionally deal with negative feedback from consumers on their Facebook and Twitter pages. Brickl responds to customer concerns and comments on Facebook without removing them from the page or restricting the ability to post. "Social media is an excellent tool to allow bi-directional communication between us and the consumer," he states. "We have to be ready for the fact that our decisions won't always be in line with the consumer, but we welcome the discourse." The authenticity of organic food and transparency of production methods has been key in creating a community that promotes direct consumer engagement with organic businesses. Brickl believes that this transparency has allowed for a more simple approach to telling their story: "The approach comes easily because of the authenticity of the brand."

The Ocean Mist Farms Story: For the Love of Artichokes!

Since 1924, Ocean Mist Farms has made their name producing their signature crop, artichokes, in Castroville, California. Though the business has expanded and taken on the production of other vegetables, Ocean Mist remains a family-owned company of third- and fourth-generation growers. As technology has grown to be a key aspect of communicating and forming lasting relationships with consumers, Ocean Mist has created an incredible website bursting with information about growing, harvesting, preparing, and eating artichokes. The Ocean Mist



Ocean Mist's signature crop. Photo courtesy of Ocean Mist Farms.

website is the largest collection of pages dedicated to artichokes online, and they couldn't be more proud!

Ocean Mist also employs a number of other tools to share their love for artichokes with consumers. The Artichoke Aficionados Club began in 2008 and now boasts over 7,500 members who are able to access the Artichoke Aficionados webpage to post recipes, view videos, and read articles about artichokes. Best of all, the Artichoke Aficionados newsletter, distributed monthly, offers a sweepstakes for members to win a case of artichokes delivered straight to their door. Members read and answer an artichoke-related trivia question, a marketing method that inspires members to learn more about artichoke production in order to win. Winning the case of artichokes generates Ocean Mist brand loyalty unrivaled in the market.



Ocean Mist recently launched an "Artichokes from Ocean Mist Farms" Facebook page that allows artichoke fans and consumers to congregate online. They also created an artichoke-focused Twitter account, which encourages followers to connect with each other, share recipes, and ask questions. These social media tools, as well as the Artichoke Aficionados Club, have "created a vehicle to connect and communicate directly while promoting artichokes to a unique target market," states Kori Tuggle, Director of Marketing & Business Development at Ocean Mist Farms. "We focus only on one consumer audience and one commodity. It helps us narrow down our content and efforts to one subject – one story: everything artichokes."

By approaching storytelling both online and in a real world setting, Ocean Mist is able to engage their target audience while rewarding their participation with a case of artichokes. Successful storytelling is less about being present in all forms of social media and more focused on taking a creative approach. Ocean Mist makes a direct connection to their consumers through the artichoke giveaway, but it is the members of the Artichoke Aficionados Club that have come together to share artichoke recipes and stories through the website, Facebook page, and artichoke Twitter stream. This brand loyalty extends beyond the computer and into the marketplace where dedicated aficionados will seek out Ocean Mist's signature crop.

The Happy Girl Kitchen Story: Sharing Time-Honored Traditions

Todd and Jordan Champagne fell in love with food preservation in 1999 while spending the summer on a farm in Norway. After using excess produce to create pickles and preserves of all varieties, they returned to the U.S. to pursue their passion. Fearless Pickles, their first line of pickled vegetables, grew into Happy Girl Kitchen as they expanded their preserved offerings beyond pickles. The couple has built their small business by forming deeply personal relationships with local organic farmers who work with them to secure large amounts of produce for pickling and preserving.

As interest in home food preservation grew, Happy Girl began teaching workshops in various locations throughout the San Francisco Bay Area. Along with these classes came a demand for reasonably priced, large quantities of organic produce. Todd and Jordan were able to meet these requests by forming the Happy Girl Food Preservationists, an online community for customers interested in preserving the harvest at home. Their weekly newsletter, which details the happenings at Happy Girl and lists the bulk produce offerings for the week, has over 1,000 members including preservers from across the nation. Preservationists



Happy Girl Food Preservationists await fellow members for produce pick-up. Photo courtesy of Happy Girl Kitchen.

can order bulk produce for pickup at the homes of other members through an online store on the Happy Girl website, which is also home to the Happy Girl Kitchen Co. online store and blog. This online presence allows Todd and Jordan to reach customers and home food preservers everywhere.

Although they once relied mainly on word of mouth at farmers' markets, the Happy Girl story has spread far and wide, including a recent feature on the *New York Times* website. From this success, they are now able to share their story in a space of their own. In October 2010, Happy Girl Kitchen opened their café doors in Pacific Grove, CA. This location serves as a hub for food preservationists across the central coast who are able to see the production kitchen in action, take workshops, sample and buy Happy Girl goodies, and congregate twice a year for celebrations. Their grand opening party featured a recipe exchange with over 200 attendees sampling items and sharing stories and recipes with each other. To publicize their café and events, Happy Girl has turned to social media. Their Facebook page has over 1,500 fans who are able to ask questions and share their preservation stories and photos with a community of preserving enthusiasts. Jordan answers many of the questions herself, but hopes that the page will take on an interactive aspect of its own as fans begin to connect with each other.



Recipe exchange at Happy Girl's grand opening party. Photo courtesy of Happy Girl Kitchen.

The Happy Girl website, blog, and Facebook page propel Happy Girl's story into the online organic community while their storefront exists to connect to consumers and passionate food preservationists in a real world setting. This unique approach to building community has been a success for Happy Girl. As Todd and Jordan discovered food traditions of the past, they have aided in growing and supporting the next generation of home food preservers.

Ready to Share Your Story?

There are many tools available to growers and producers looking to share their story. Tuggle advises social media newcomers to "Jump in!" Let these examples inspire your own storytelling. "The ultimate goal or return for getting engaged in social media is that once fans find you, they will promote your story for you," Tuggle adds. Most social media sites are free of cost, making Facebook and Twitter useful marketing tools for smaller producers on a budget. Facebook pages allow consumers to engage with businesses on a personal level by giving them the power to contribute through comments and postings. Many CCOF clients and members, ranging from small family-owned farms to larger businesses, have Facebook pages. For inspiration or examples, visit these Facebook pages: McEvoy Ranch, Guayaki Yerba Mate, Dirty Girl Produce, Earthbound Farm, Lundberg Family Farms, and Straus Family Creamery.

"The ultimate goal or return for getting engaged in social media is that once fans find you, they will promote your story for you"

While email newsletters and marketing campaigns have been crucial in communicating with customers, social media tools like Facebook and Twitter guarantee that information will be received by the consumer. Brickl notes that the readership of the Organic Valley newsletters has decreased as consumers have begun accessing information and updates through social media. Consumer engagement is key to a marketing campaign's success; Brickl has adjusted Organic Valley's approach to enable customers to continue to comment and engage with the cooperative through other mediums. Most importantly, Brickl notes, it is necessary that producers adapt to the constantly changing realm of communication in order to stay connected with customers.

The "Know a California Farmer" campaign, initiated by the California Agricultural Communications Commission (CACC), is a wonderful resource for California growers and producers looking to share their story. Featuring videos, photographs, and blog entries by farmers, the "Know a California Farmer" website helps producers statewide find their voice. CCOF client Lundberg Family Farms has posted a number of photo albums, including a "Meet the Lundberg Rice Farming Family" album for consumers to put a face to their brand. The CACC "Communications Toolbox" feature provides reference materials developed for growers entering the realm of social media. The toolbox offers walk-through guides to sites such as Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube, and includes a number of articles on how social media is being used for public relations by businesses.

The National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition has created an initiative to assist farmers and producers in managing media and public relations. Farm and Agriculture Resources for Media (FARM), is designed to support producers by

providing media training and resources to build business and visibility while spreading the sustainable agriculture movement. Their "Media & Public Relations Tool Kit for Farmers" includes tutorials on generating press coverage, writing press releases, and creating media kits; while the media training webinar, "Share Your Farm Story: Tools and Tactics to Market Your Business and Connect with Media," focuses on identifying and executing media goals. These tools are free to use and recommended for producers looking to increase their visibility in the organic market.

Lastly, and most importantly, be creative! Do not take a one-size-fits-all approach to telling your story. Distinguish yourself by finding your unique story and use these tools to help you find the best way to share it. Innovative ideas like the Ocean Mist Artichoke Aficionados Club propel growers and producers in the marketplace while allowing them to connect with their most loyal customers. Organic Valley surprises customers with freebies at their local market to reward them for shopping organic and to gain brand loyalty. Happy Girl's Food Preservationists are more than acquaintances with shared hobbies; they are now advocates and committed clients. Begin to tell your story to anyone who will listen. Integrate new media, creativity, and enthusiasm and you will begin to see that others are telling and sharing your story for you.

Resources to Help You Share Your Story

Facebook - www.facebook.com. Make a profile page for your business to connect with over 500 million users worldwide. Promote your brand through posts, updates, and direct links to your website.

Local Harvest - www.localharvest.org. Local Harvest aggregates information on farmers' markets, retailers, CSAs, and farms to provide buyers and consumers with options for local food purchasing. Build your customer base and be part of the local foods community.

Know A California Farmer - www.knowacaliforniafarmer.com. Create a profile of your farm using photographs, videos, and blogs. The communications toolbox includes detailed and useful guides for social media tools.

National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition - www.sustainableagriculture.net. Visit the "Take Action" tab to access the FARM toolkit for producers.

Twitter - www.twitter.com. Post pictures, thoughts, and videos in real time. Use search tags to make it easy for readers to find you. Enter #AgChat for examples of targeted posts.

CCOF Blog Roll - www.ccof.org/memberblogs.php. Do you share your story online? CCOF maintains a list of clients and members who actively blog. To share your blog with CCOF, please email ccof@ccof.org with a link.

YouTube - www.youtube.com. Post videos of planting, harvest, and events. For inspiration, view videos by CCOF clients: Full Belly Farm, Lundberg Family Farms, Earthbound Farm, Ocean Mist Farms, Organic Valley, and Straus Family Creamery.

Selling at Farmers' Markets

In July of 1934, a small group of growers first trucked their produce to an empty lot in Los Angeles with the hopes of bringing produce directly to their consumers. Years later, the farmers' market industry continues to gain momentum, with over 6,100 farmers' markets nationwide and growing. As consumers become more aware of how their food choices affect their bodies and the environment, they increasingly seek food sources that improve their health and decrease their carbon footprints. Today, farmers' markets make a major contribution to California's economy, allowing the direct marketing of California-grown produce to consumers.



Farmer's markets provide organic farmers with the opportunity to sell directly to consumers, thus capturing a greater percentage of their shopping dollar. The many benefits to this sales method include:

- Growers can educate their buyers about their growing practices and the many reasons to buy organic.
- Some markets also allow sampling or host comparative tastings that allow growers to show off their delicious crops and entice customers to their booths.
- Farmers' markets provide a great opportunity for organic farmers to cultivate customer loyalty and get immediate feedback.
- Growers can sell small quantities of new or unusual products at farmers' markets to gauge consumer interest for future planting strategies.
- Produce sold at farmer's markets is exempt from conventional regulations mandating labeling, sizing and packaging required when selling wholesale or direct to produce stores. This exemption from standard pack and size requirements can make production more cost effective.

While there are many benefits of selling at a market, entering a market for the first time can seem a daunting task. The following steps and tips are provided to aid our members in accessing this direct sales channel and understanding the regulations associated with selling at farmers' markets.

As the majority of CCOF-certified growers are based in California, some of the below information is specific to California Certified Farmers' Markets. Growers outside California should check with their state agriculture department to find out how farmers' markets are regulated in their state.

Step 1. Do the Research - Find an Available Farmers' Market

The first step towards accessing a farmers' market is to find out which market locations have available booth space. There are many markets within a given county; however, some markets may not have vacancies, or may already be at capacity for certain types of produce. It is important to map out desired markets and contact them directly to ensure space availability before going through with the next steps.

Tip: Mention to a farmers' market manager that you are certified organic; often, farmers' market managers will allow a certified organic producer to enter into the market even when other farmers are already selling the same type of produce, conventionally grown.

Step 2. Become a Certified "Local" Producer

California Certified Farmers' Markets can only offer produce and other products that have been grown or processed in California. Producers wishing to sell at a farmers' market must obtain a Certified Producer Certificate from a County Agricultural Commissioner to verify their status as local. A separate certificate is required in each county in which a producer wishes to sell. This certification process involves an inspection of growing areas as well as a verification of products to be sold at the market. Only items listed on the



certificate can be sold at farmers' markets, and the certificate must be displayed conspicuously at the market for customer access.

Fees for these certificates are billed annually. Products can often be added to the certificate at no additional charge. Contact your County Agricultural

Commissioner or local agricultural representative to find out how to apply (see Information and Resources).

Note: The Certified Producer Certificates are different from organic certificates. Documentation of organic status from both a certifying agency, such as CCOF, and the State of California are also required.

Continued on page 32

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Step 3. Other Considerations

Packing Requirements and Non-Agricultural Products

Certified Producer Certificates allow growers to sell their fruits, vegetables, eggs, honey, and nursery plants at farmers' markets without meeting packing requirements. This exemption from standard pack and size requirements can make production more cost effective. Growers may also market processed products including juices, jams and jellies, wine, and nuts that are derived from produce listed on their certificates. Please note: processed products must also comply with any additional applicable health department requirements.

While farmers' markets were established for produce sales, many markets also offer a section designated for prepared foods and retail items. In California, these areas must be separated from the Certified Farmers' Market section. To access this option, it is imperative to contact the desired market for space availability and any additional requirements.

Cost Savings from Sharing Market Booths

Some markets allow certified producers to share a market booth with another producer. This friendly-farmer agreement allows each grower to benefit from the sales while reducing booth costs, which can be quite beneficial for first-time farmers. Each producer's certificate must be displayed and their produce must be identifiable. Growers must receive approval from the Certified Farmers' Market to sell for other certified producers. Local markets should be contacted directly for specific regulations.

Signage/Marketing at the Market

Differentiate yourself from other vendors by clearly communicating your organic status and make the most of your new presence at the farmers' market.



Display your organic certification. Visit www.ccof.org/store.php for CCOF signs and organic labels.

Along with the Certified Producer Certificate from the County Agricultural Commissioner, organic growers must display their Organic Registration for the State of California and Organic Certificate from a USDA-accredited certifier. Displaying these certificates provides verification that products represented as organic are actually certified and allows consumers to readily access information about production methods. Signs identifying organic produce can help organic growers distinguish their stand from other growers at the market. Growers who sell organic and non-organic produce at their stand must clearly distinguish between certified organic and non-organic items.



Information and Resources

The California Federation of Certified Farmers' Markets — www.cafarmersmarkets.net/index2.html. Information for potential vendors as well as basic rules and regulations for growers and market coordinators.

California County Agricultural Commissioners & Sealers — www.cdffa.ca.gov/exec/county/County_Contacts.html. Contact for 'California grower' certificate-related questions.

The California Department of Food and Agriculture — www.cdffa.ca.gov/is/i_&c/cfm.html. Providing directory listings of Certified Farmers' Markets in California and information on accessing markets, including a preliminary certificate application and a list of markets by county.

The UC Small Farm Center — www.sfc.ucdavis.edu/farmers_market/. Farmers' market resources with a step-by-step access guide and information on regulations and organizing a new market.

The Agricultural Marketing Service — www.ams.usda.gov. Facts and figures on farmers' markets nationwide as well as press releases and other related publications.

The Networking Association for Farm Direct Marketing and Agritourism — www.nafdma.com/Resources. Helpful links related to direct marketing and helpful tips for growers outside California.

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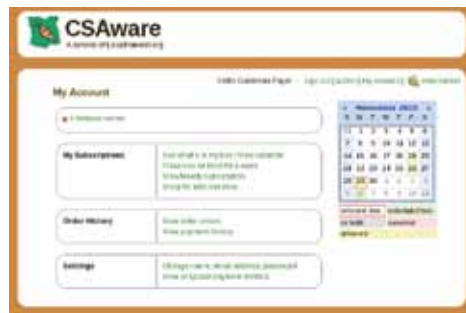


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Website Reviews

CSA Management Services – Streamlining a Once Difficult Management System

Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) is a direct-to-consumer sales method that allows the public to purchase a “share” of a farmer’s seasonal harvest. Shareholders purchase their membership in order to receive a box of produce and other goods from a local producer on a scheduled basis. CSA programs guarantee income to the farmer who can tailor the share price to address their on-farm production costs. As the popularity of CSAs has increased, the need for a management system has become apparent; farmers often complain about the time and energy it takes to manage and maintain their CSA program. Streamlining CSA management allows producers to spend more time on the field and less time managing member sign-up, payments, and orders. These services eliminate multiple spreadsheets of members and payments by providing online ordering options and convenient organizational tools. Both sites below are customer-friendly, highly customizable, and provide similar services for farmers operating CSA programs.



CSAWare — www.csaware.com. For over two years, Local Harvest (www.localharvest.org) has worked to develop CSAWare, an online service for managing and tracking CSA programs. CSAWare is a flexible option for CSA managers. Shareholders can sign up and pay for their box online, order additional items on the farm store, and manage their account information. They can also place future deliveries on hold and check the status of their orders. Farmers can

offer subscriptions of different sizes and frequencies with a number of delivery options, all customizable by the manager. These features can be turned on and off depending on the needs of the producer. The CSAWare administrative site allows producers to look at analytics of purchases and growth in shares or deliveries, print labels and harvest lists, email members, and change share items and sizes. Many of the management tools are multilingual and all options are customizable.



Farmigo — www.farmigo.com. Farmigo provides an online dashboard for CSA managers to coordinate harvests, payments, orders, and deliveries. The member section of the dashboard provides an overview of active orders, communications, and status of member subscriptions while the reports section allows managers to print labels, generate packing lists, and monitor deposits and cash flow. Managers organize their webstore, newsletters, and messages in the market section and manage share sizes and harvests in the farm section. Managers can also be provided with a web store for share-holders to order additional items. The sign-up wizard is customizable and makes member registration convenient and informative. Shareholders can access their orders, payments, account information, and put their share on hold through the online system.

Both Farmigo and CSAWare offer private demonstrations for those looking to get started with a CSA management system and they will work with you to develop a service that works for you and your shareholders.

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 Lacey, WA

John Navalesi
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WSDA Organic Registered Material, see most current WSDA Organic list at http://agr.wa.gov/FoodAnimal/Organic/docs/bnml_by_product.pdf

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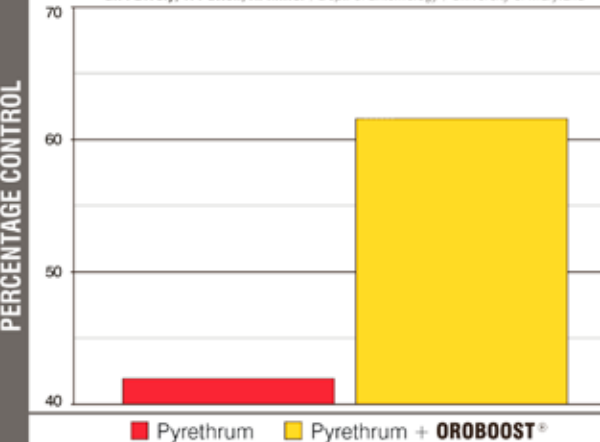


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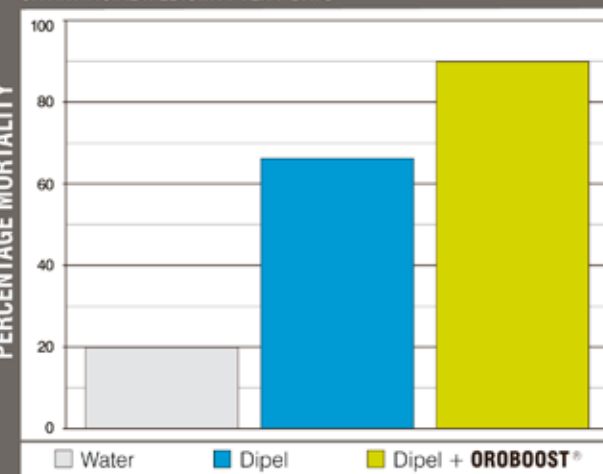
BY PYRETHRUM ALONE & PYRETHRUM + OROBOOST® TREATMENTS

G.P. Dively, T. Patton, A. Miller / Dept. of Entomology / University of Maryland



PERCENTAGE MORTALITY OF FALSE CODLING MOTH LARVAE

ON ARTIFICIAL MEDIUM AFTER 7 DAYS



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Classified Ads

For Sale

JD 900HC Tractor

3220 hrs w/Buddingh Weeder Co. Basket Weeder set up for 10 plant lines, tractor widened out to 80 inches. \$14,500 for both. Please call (559) 352-1700 for more information.

Lockwood Potato Harvester

Model 4500. 2 row. \$4,500. Please call (559) 352-1700 for more information.

2 Lockwood Potato Planters

Model 4000. 4 rows pick style. \$4,500 for both. Please call (559) 352-1700 for more information.

Refrigerated Trailer For Sale

24' refrigerated trailer for sale. Works well. \$3,000. For more information contact John Teixeira at (559) 694-0017 or by email at lonewillow@aol.com.

Fruit and Vegetable Sizer For Sale

Greefa type, 6 drops, loading chute and tables. For sale for \$4,500 in Gridley, CA. Please call (530) 570-7211 or email wooleyfarms@msn.com for more information.

Processing Equipment

Used walnut processing equipment for sale in Paso Robles, CA. Complete plant with 8 dehydrating bins, conveyors, squirrel cage, natural gas unit, outside elevator, and leaf blower for \$10,000. No rock bin or air leg. Equipment is in good condition but has not run for some years. It is intact and ready for dismantling. Price varies depending on deal. Custom designed self-contained electric portable conveyor on rollers: \$1,500 (priced separately). For complete details, contact Coco from Fair Oaks Ranch at (805) 238-3811.

Land for Sale or Lease

Seven Certified Organic Acres For Lease in the Salinas Valley

About 7 acres of land, with or without a house, is available in the Salinas Valley of California. The land has excellent drainage and production, certified organic history, and has long been used in strawberry production. Ag structures are available for compliance and general usage and there is a new ultra efficient Ag-pump with large

tanks. Some equipment and fabrication are available. Very flexible terms. For more information or a meeting, contact Lance Cleaver, owner, at (831) 905-3411 or by emailing batcom@aol.com.

20-acre Boulder Creek Property For Rent

This 2 bedroom, 2 bath house rests on a sunny south-facing meadow with 3 acres fenced for organic farming. Over 10 acres are usable and water is provided by the city. The land has been used as a vineyard as well as for vegetables, herbs, and goats. The gated property sits on a private road. Rent is set at \$2500/month. Email lesliexleland@gmail.com or call (408) 218-3496 for more details.

Crops For Sale

Organic Alfalfa

CCOF certified organic alfalfa, approximately 100 tons of dairy quality, tested premium and supreme. Barn stored, 3-string, 135 lb. bales. No rain. Price includes storage until approximately June 1, 2011. Trucking is available. Call Tom at (530) 279-2223 or (530) 569-0383 for pricing and information.

Organic Tuscan Blue Rosemary

CCOF certified organic Tuscan Blue Rosemary available fresh for bread bakers and food processors. Up to 2,000 pounds ready now or for weekly shipments up to 100 pounds year round. 10 pound sacks, 6 to 12 inch lengths, FOB Santa Rosa, CA. Prices negotiable but prompt payment required. Contact Wine Country Cuisine at (707) 585-9434 or email WineCountryCuisine@directv.net.

Organic Timothy and Fescue/Clover Mix Hay

CCOF certified organic excellent high-desert quality hay - put up right. 3-twine bales 125-140lbs. Truckload sales only. Trucking can be arranged. Located in Lakeview, OR. For pricing and more information call (541) 947-4062 or (541) 417-0284.

Employment

Crew Supervisor Wanted

Ploughshare Farm, a 400-member CSA in Alexandria, MN, is now hiring for a Field Crew Supervisor. Primary duties will

be harvest and field crew supervision. A minimum of three seasons on a diversified vegetable farm is required. Supervisory experience strongly preferred. Compensation: a competitive hourly wage based upon experience, and housing in a 3 BR, split-logged home. Long-term job opportunities are a possibility after trial period of one year. Couples and families welcome. Application deadline is February 1, 2011. For more information, contact Gary Brever by emailing gjbrever@midwestinfo.net. Visit www.ploughsharefarm.com for details.

Ploughshare Farm Internships

Join the intern team at Ploughshare Farm for the 2011 season! Wage, room, board and an excellent learning experience. Email gjbrever@midwestinfo.net for more details.

Start-up Farm - Operating Partner(s)

Old School farm is a start-up farm operation on 54 acres that was once a family dairy farm. Operating partner(s) would live free of charge in a 6 bedroom home. For ongoing work on the farm, the operating partner would acquire a significant vested ownership interest. Plans for the farm include a wide variety of animals, poultry, fruits, and vegetables. The idea is to have a very bio-diverse and self-sustaining farm and to use the operation as a showcase for how to farm gently yet productively on the land. Educational events, workshops, seasonal events, and community activities as well as a roadside farmstand and seasonal cafe are also planned. This is a ground floor/blank slate opportunity for an individual or couple to bring their creativity, passion, and strong work ethic to a beautiful setting and play a major role in developing something special. Old School Farm is located in Honesdale, PA - Wayne County. Contact alanbenner@gmail.com for details.

Classified Ad Submission

CCOF certified members and supporting members may run classified ads for free online and in Certified Organic, the CCOF Magazine, as space permits. To submit your ad, please email ccof@ccof.org or fax your ad to CCOF at (831) 423-4528 with a subject line of "CCOF member classified ad."

Events Calendar

February 8-10, 2011
World Ag Expo, International Agri-Center, Tulare, CA

The World Ag Expo, the world's largest annual agricultural exposition, brings together the latest in agricultural technology and innovation with 1,600 exhibitors and an average of 100,000 attendees. Attend free seminars, cooking demonstrations, and more. Visit CCOF at booth #3424 and join us in promoting organic agriculture.

February 18-20, 2011
CCOF Annual Convention, Ventura, CA

Join us for CCOF's second Annual Convention, February 18-20, 2011, in Ventura, California. The Convention begins with the CCOF Inc. Board of Directors meeting and training on February 18, 2011. The CCOF Annual Meeting and Reception hosted by the South Coast Chapter will be held from

5pm-9pm on February 18, 2011. Day two of the Annual Convention is a full day Education Conference, *Growing the Organic Market*, with hands-on workshops and panel presentations focused on how to bring your organic product to market. Day two will also include a trade show of exhibitors that service and provide marketing support to the organic industry. Farm tours of local CCOF operations in the Ventura/Oxnard area are planned for the third and final day of the Convention.

March 6-8, 2011
California Small Farm Conference, San Jose, CA

This three day educational conference, titled "Small Farms: Bright Futures" is the premier gathering of small farmers and those who support them. Enjoy on-farm tours, focused workshops, general educational sessions, and opportunities for peer networking at the 24th California

Small Farm Conference. Visit CCOF's booth in the exhibitor room to speak with us about organic.

March 10-13, 2011
Natural Products Expo West, Anaheim Convention Center, Anaheim, CA

Join CCOF at the premier trade show for the natural, organic, and healthy products industry to enjoy the best products of today and explore future trends. With thousands of exhibitors and over 50,000 professionals and peers, Natural Products Expo West is a great chance to network and stay up-to-date on industry issues and trends. Visit CCOF at booth #2611.

For more organic events, visit CCOF's online calendar at www.ccof.org/calendar.php.

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